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Assistant Director for Operations

26 April 1957

STATSPEC

Political Survey of the Soviet Press by FDD

REF : Memorandum from AD/NE dated 19 April 1957, Same Subject.

1. A survey of this type would be of considerable value and FDD should be asked to undertake regular publication. Its usefulness could be improved by addition of a Table of contents.
2. A general statement of purpose, indicating the orientation of the survey, would be at least as valuable as a sample survey for purposes of critiquing and comment.
3. It is suggested that [REDACTED] coordinate with the USIA group which puts out the monthly "Notes from the Soviet Provincial Press" (temporarily suspended, but to be resumed at a later date). Although the FDD and USIA products differ in format and scope--FDD's being far more ambitious--there will probably be considerable overlap unless there is coordination.
4. Based on the sample, FDD's selection of materials appears to be good. Usefulness might be increased if extracts were grouped thematically, and perhaps introduced with a brief background paragraph with judgments on frequency of discussion of given themes, and other pertinent observations.
5. It might be suggested to FDD that their surveys should concentrate particularly on related materials bearing on one or more major problems in each issue. This is not to say that random items of unusual interest should not also be included, but they should be placed apart from series having a thematic unity. For research purposes, it is obviously more useful for purposes of generalizing, to establish such a distinction.
6. The section on Party meetings is easily the most useful part of the survey, although the category Party meetings is in itself too diffuse to be used without refinements. Further breakdowns and corresponding organization of materials are needed.
7. If feasible, the survey might also include round-ups of provincial press comment on specific subjects which it might not be deemed worthwhile extracting at any great length. This would at least provide researchers with a guide and inform them of the existence of desired materials.

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